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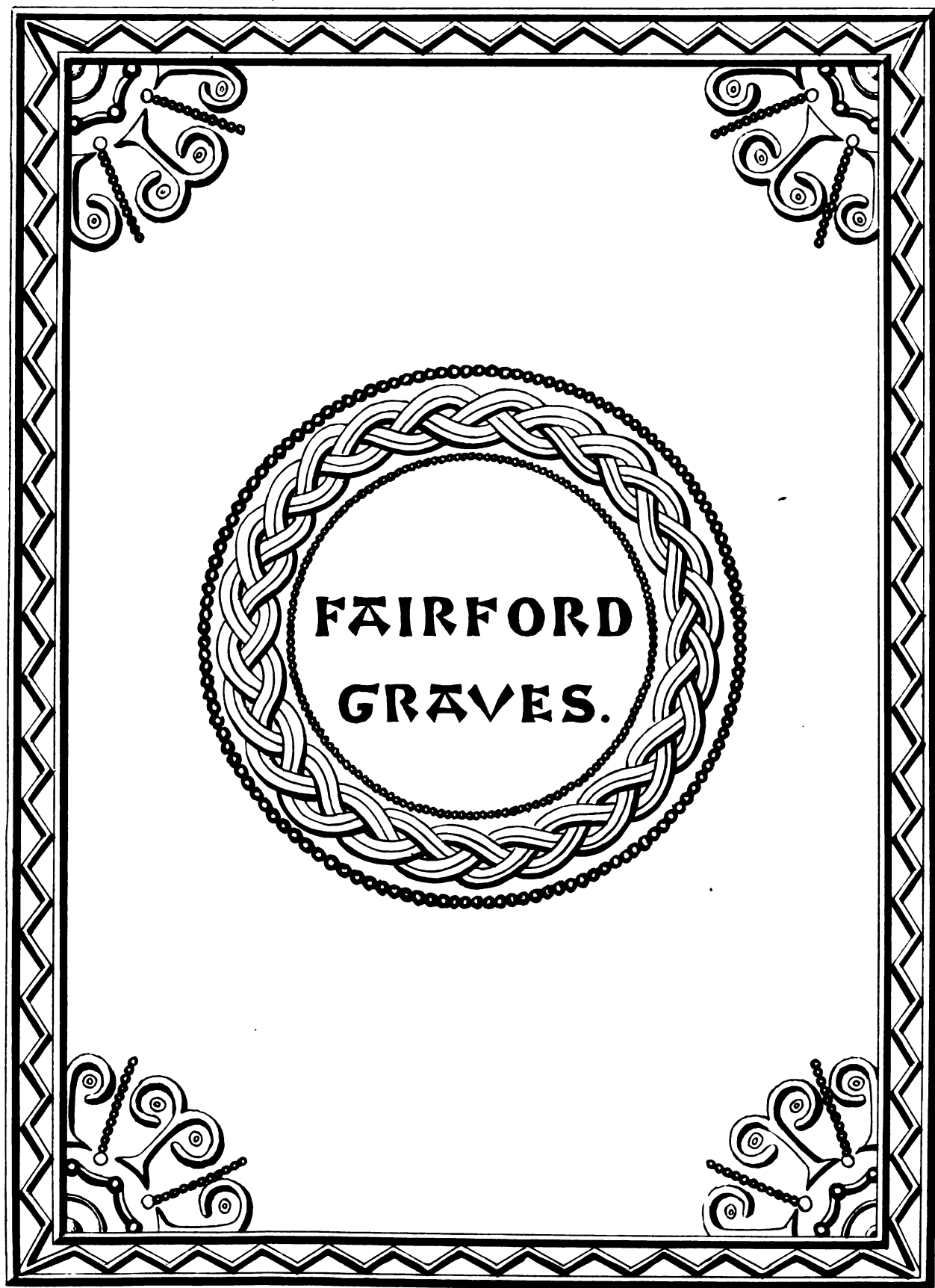
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FAIRFORD GRAVES.

A RECORD OF RESEARCHES IN

An Anglo-Saxon Burial-Place

IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

BY

WILLIAM MICHAEL WYLIE, B.A.

FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON.

Oxford:

JOHN HENRY PARKER.

MDCCLII.



TO

JOHN SHAKESPEAR, ESQ.

OF LANGLEY PRIORY, LEICESTERSHIRE,

THIS RECORD IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

WILLIAM M. WYLIE.

Preface.

So brief a record scarcely seems to ask for a preface; but it demands some apology.

The opportunity of investigating a large portion of an Anglo-Saxon necropolis, which many an able archæologist would have coveted, chance placed before *me*. Had I not been on the spot, these Fairford graves would, not improbably, have passed away, like so many others, unnoticed and unknown; but it is to be regretted that the work of discovery and narration did not fall to the lot of one better qualified for the task. I can but plead attention to detail, and accuracy in describing “*quæque ipse vidi.*”

I have felt myself bound to give a full and circumstantial record of the facts of this investigation for the benefit of others. In these matters we are all contributing our quota to the mass of information respecting the early manners and customs of the Teutonic race, which is slowly but surely accumulating, gathered by the unthanked toils of the archæologist from the various settlements of their numerous tribes throughout Europe. The subject is not merely

interesting to us alone as a national one, but intimately concerns all who claim to belong to the great and noble Teutonic family.

It seemed most desirable to give numerous illustrations of the various relics ; and these, in fact, are far more likely to be of use to the antiquarian reader, than any attempt to describe them in writing. For the loan of the large plate, and two wood-engravings of fibulæ, I am indebted to the kindness of the Council of the Society of Antiquaries.

March 1, 1852.

Fairford Graves.

“ Deare countrey, o how Dearely Deare
Ought thy remembraunce and perpetual band
Be to thy foster childe, that from thy hand
Didd commun breath and nouriture receave !
How brutish is it not to understand
How much to her we owe, that all us gave ;
That gave unto us all whatever good we have ! ”

SPENSER.

THE recent discovery of Teutonic sepulchral remains at Fairford, in Gloucestershire, has awakened the inquiry which it is the object of this narrative to satisfy. It may not, then, be amiss, in the first place, to seek out some account of this spot and country in the scanty records of the past.

Of Fairford under the Britons we know nothing ; the very name the place then bore has perished. Situate as it is in the immediate vicinity of the Roman Corinium, we may suppose it to have participated in the advantages of Roman civilisation ; but, as yet, none of the usual remains of Roman occupation have been discovered here.

On establishing themselves at Corinium, and proceeding to extend their rule over this portion of the island, the Romans found their operations materially facilitated by the opportune friendship of the British tribe of Dobuni, who then inhabited the tract of country now comprised in the shires of Oxford and Gloucester. Whatever may have been the cause of this alliance with the Romans, it seems to have been faithfully adhered to by the Dobuni. They,

doubtless, found their advantage in the civilisation and protection of their powerful friends; while to the Romans it could have been no matter of indifference that so important a settlement was in a friendly territory, and secure from all danger of sudden hostilities. The abdication of Britain by the Romans was fatal to the very existence of the Dobuni, who, in common with so many other British tribes, seemed to have disappeared before the hostile and devastating Teuton. Some of them may have taken refuge, and maintained a precarious existence, among the (at that period) wild recesses and dense thickets of the Cotswold Hills, where the invader would scarcely care to follow them. Indeed, it is said that in some of the villages of the Cotswold country, words may be still heard, and habits observed, closely resembling those of parts of Wales. The old historians abound with passages that prove the cruel persecutions practised on the Britons, ending in their almost total suppression; and Hume and Macintosh, among the moderns, express their conviction of the truth of the statement. William of Malmesbury* tells us of the war of extermination waged against the Britons by the West Saxons, who, A.D. 577, ejected them from their cities of Gloucester, Bath, and Cirencester, and hunted them like wild beasts to the shelter of the woods and hills.

“ Those fertile plains, that soften'd vale,
Wave o'er the birth-right of the Gael—
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now? See rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.”^b

It is remarkable that the Britons, after not only maintaining themselves for several centuries under the Roman sway, whether at war or peace with their conquerors, but positively flourishing under such a state of things, seem to have vanished before the Saxon invader. Some strong antagonistic antipathy must have existed between the two races, which forbade a possibility of amalgamation, and, on one side at least, a war of extermination was carried on. To read the chronicles of those times, we might imagine the slaughters of Jewish history were again recorded, and, if the ecclesiastical spirit may be supposed to be fairly personified in St. Augustine, the very clergy were not forward to prevent effusion of blood. Wales, Cornwall, and Armorica, received the fugitive

* Book i. c. 2.

^b Scott's "Lady of the Lake."

remnants of our predecessors, and the purity of our Anglo-Saxon language is the most convincing proof of the complete suppression of the British Celts.

“ In all that lond no cristen durste route ;
 All cristen folk ben fled fro that countree
 Thurgh payenes, that conquereden all aboute
 The plagis of the North by lond and see.
 To Wales fled the cristianitee
 Of olde Bretons, dwelling in this ile.”—CHAUCER.

Gloucestershire, with Worcestershire, and part of Warwickshire, became a province of Mercia, the largest of the several Saxon principalities, under the name of Huiccia or Wiccia, and its Angle population assumed or obtained the name of Wiccii. A grant of land at Fairford appears to have been made, about A.D. 850, to the Church of Gloucester by their prince. “Burghredus, rex Wicciorum,” (or, as he is elsewhere called, rex Merciorum), “dedit Deo, et Sancto Petro, Glouc. et “monialibus ejus loci, duas hidas terræ apud Faireford, tempore Evæ Abbatissæ.”^a This seems the earliest mention of the place.

Saxon Fairford, then, is a pretty village on the banks of the little river Coln, well known for its crystal waters and its trout, to all lovers of angling. Here it quits the steep slopes and valleys of the Cotswold ridge, and flows some four miles through the plain to join the Thames near Lechlade.

Fairford seems to have obtained its Saxon name from the ford by which the Coln was here crossed before the days of universal bridges, when probably the stream spread its waters over the low ground, and the present meadows were an impassable morass.

In “Domesday Book,” the manor stands under the title of Terra Regis. “Brictrix held Fayreforde in Brictwoldesberg hundred. There were twenty-one “hides in the time of King Edward, and fifty-six villeins, and nine bordars, with “thirty plow-tillages. There is a priest who held one virgate of land of the “Manor, and three mills of 32s. 6d. There are now only thirteen hides, and one “yard land. Queen Maud held this Manor, and Humphrey paid her 38l. and “10s. by tale. The queen gave four hides of the land of this Manor to John “the chamberlain. There are two plow-tillages, and nine villeins, and four bor- “dars, with four plow-tillages. There are fourteen *servi*, who pay 9l. for their “farm. The queen, also, gave Baldwin three hides, and three virgates of the

^a Dugdale, Mon. Angl.

“ same land, and he has these two plow-tillages, and five *servi*, and one free man, who has one plow-tillage, and two bordars. It is worth 4*l*. Those who held these two estates in the time of King Edward could not withdraw themselves from the chief of the manor.”—*Domesday Book*, p. 69.

“ In 1263, 47 Hen. III., Richard de Clare, earl of Gloucester and Hertford, obtained this lordship, with privilege of a market and fairs, which in the succeeding reign was confirmed to Gilbert his son, whose sister and co-heir, Elianor, conveyed it by marriage to Hugh le Despencer the younger, in 1314. From this last family it descended to the Beauchamps and Nevilles, earls of Warwick, and was one of the hundred and fourteen manors which were fraudulently obtained from Anne, countess of Warwick, by King Henry VII., by a deed dated December 13, 1488. John Tame purchased this manor of the Crown in 1498.”*

It is said that this John Tame had the fortune to capture a vessel bound from the Low Countries to Rome, with a freight of beautiful coloured glass destined for the windows of some church. It has been fancied the designs were by Albert Durer, but chronology will hardly sanction this view, though one window in particular always reminds me strongly of his manner. Some of the colours of this old glass are exquisite; and the extraordinary details of certain of the paintings are said to have called forth the commendations of Vandyke. It has been most fortunate in escaping the perils of the Reformation and the Civil Wars. John Tame's piety, or good taste, induced him to value the treasure, and, as a fitting storehouse, he erected the present church, on the site, as is supposed, of a former one. This building, with its famed windows, is still one of the ornaments of England, though the glass requires skilful examination and restoration, and the interior of the edifice itself has been disfigured by wretched internal additions and alterations. John Tame left an ample fund to maintain his noble church, and the hoarded accumulations of this, in zealous hands, would go far to restore the building to its pristine splendour. The tomb of this John Tame and his wife, of polished Purbeck marble, enriched with brasses, is in the north aisle, and bears the curious legend,—

For Jesu's sake, pray for me ;
 I may not pray nowe — pray ye !
 With a Pater Noster and an Ave,
 That our paynys releasyd may be.

* Bigland.

Leland says of Fairford, "It is a praty uplandish towne, and much of it
" longith, with the Personage, to Tewksbyri Abbay.

" Fairford never flourished afore the cumming of the Tames unto it."

From Tewksbury Abbey the benefice passed to the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester, who now hold it.

When we first resided at Fairford in 1847, I heard some bones, armour, &c., had been found about three years previously, on quarrying in a field near the town. From the accounts then given, I was led to suppose a skirmish had occurred there during some of our civil wars, and at the time made no further inquiry. I only mention this to point out how necessary it is to examine every antiquarian circumstance, however trifling it may at first appear. Through this primary inattention I had well-nigh missed seeing these objects at all. In this case, most probably, these Fairford memorials would have passed away to oblivion, and failed to take their part in the history of the race, which it yet remains for the antiquary to write. The field where these remains were found, lies just out of Fairford, to the west, on the summit of the bank that gently slopes to the meadows of the Coln. It appears to have been separated from the manor about the times of James II., and had long been in the family of the Rev. I. Keble, the well-known author of "The Christian Year." In 1844 it was sold to a benefit club of the place, which immediately proceeded to cut down the fine old beech-trees then growing there, and to quarry stone for a wall. At this period, 1844-5, the field was divided into two inclosures, of about two acres each, one being arable, the other very old grass land, and with this latter portion we have now to do. Having been in spade cultivation since 1844, the surface is level enough, but, on diligent inquiry, I find that when in turf it was somewhat uneven, and undulating, though presenting no positive appearance of tumuli, or of having been disturbed. From the circumstance, however, of finding during our diggings an occasional copper coin of William and Mary, and preceding reigns, I am inclined to think there was a time when this field may have been arable. This would account for the obliteration of the tumuli; the finding interments sometimes very close to the present surface of the soil; and also for the other changes which have manifestly occurred on the ground. Sometimes we found hollows filled up to a considerable depth with the rich surface soil, interspersed with teeth of animals, pottery, &c., and occasionally the subsoil would present every appearance of having been disturbed since the interments had taken place. Most probably the tumuli had furnished a ready means of filling up these hol-

lows, and such interments as lay beneath them were also often broken up. No record of such an event, however, remains. I should have given a sketch of the spot, but all interest afforded by the accessories of nature is gone, and our only consolation is, that the same agency which destroyed the natural beauty of the surface has rendered us acquainted with what lay below. At present, the most experienced antiquarian eye would fail to detect the existence of an Anglo-Saxon *totten-feld* in a small enclosure bounded by stone walls, denuded of trees, and diversified by a lime-kiln, and a growing crop of labourers' cottages.

"The stranger shall come and build there, and remove the heaped-up earth. An half-worn sword shall rise before him; bending above it, he will say, 'These are the arms of the chiefs of old, but their names are not in song.'"^a

The field bore the name of *Waterslade*, Saxon enough in its derivation; as, perhaps also, are those of the adjoining lands, *Garrows*; *Garstons* or *Gascons*; *Hempland*; and, further on, the *Waiten Hill*.

In 1850 the club was broken up, and the field sold in small allotments. Some of these were purchased by a mason of Fairford, who at once opened a quarry to obtain building stone, and employed for the purpose the same men who had been engaged on the previous excavation. Towards the end of June 1850, one of these men brought me down a number of beads of what seemed porcelain, terra-cotta, and some vitreous substance encrusted with colours; also some pieces of rough amber, all of which likewise were perforated. These they had found by the skull of a skeleton, discovered on removing the soil. I told him to give me notice if more were found, and this occurred July 2. I at once went up and saw the earth carefully removed from a skeleton, perfect even to the teeth, lying with head to the south-west, about two and a half feet deep, immediately below the subsoil, upon the stone-brash or rubble—"the rock," as it is here termed. No appearance of coffin existed. It measured full six feet, but as the head was depressed, and legs were somewhat bent, we judged the height in life must have been six feet six inches. The bones were remarkably large, but the skull fell to pieces on being touched. On the right breast were two circular concave fibulæ (Pl. iii. fig. 4), of bronze, richly gilt, and ornamented in front. The backs, on removing the corrosion, seemed to have been silvered. When first exhumed, the gilding shone brightly, but, on exposure to the air, this soon tarnished, and went to pieces. Iron pins had been used for fastening the fibulæ, as shown by the

^a Ossian. Caric-thura.

corrosion at the hinges. These concave fibulæ are rare; I have since found them, but always decomposed. This would seem attributable to the fact of the ornamental gilding having been laid on a bed of some perishable composition, whereas the flat and the cup-shaped specimens are of solid metal, and consequently very durable. Generally, the mere bronze shells remain, and in this state much resemble small scales.* By one hand was a large, flattish, round, perforated bead, of dark green glass (Pl. iv. fig. 2), an inch and three-quarters in diameter, deeply cut for the bed of some coloured substance now decomposed.^b

By the other hand were some pieces of rough, perforated amber, of the dark red colour. In its earth-stained condition I did not at first recognise this substance, till the men, who had often before met with it in the graves, spoke of its burning freely in the fire, recalling to mind the very words of Tacitus, "Si naturam succini admoto igne tentes, in modum tedæ accenditur, alitque flammam pinguem et olentem."—*De Germ. Moribus*.

Two small iron knives were among the ribs of this skeleton. Pieces of pottery also, of various kinds, and large burnt stones, were in the grave.

I was present also from time to time when many other skeletons were found. The most remarkable was that of a warrior, which measured seven feet. It was found quite perfect, and the bones were of an enormous size. A spear-head, measuring nine inches and a half in length (Pl. xi. fig. 3), was by the skull; and by the side was another of very unusual form and length. It is shaped like a bayonet, but has four sides, and measures sixteen inches and a half in length, by two in the widest breadth (Pl. x. fig. 2). It reminds one of the spear of Thorolf, in the Saga, "Cujus ferrum duas ulnas longum, in mucronem *quatuor acies habentem*, desinebat." With this were also three bronze studs, with the handle and boss of a shield of the pointed type (Pl. x. fig. 3), perhaps used also as an offensive weapon in the close quarters of a *mêlée*.

"*Brocchiere*," says Muratori,^c "s'io non m'inganno, fu chiamata quella specie di scudi che nel mezzo teneva uno spontone, o chiodo acuto di ferro, ed eminente, con cui anche si potea ferire il nemico, se troppo si avvicinava. . . ."
"Brocca volea dire uno ferro acuto."

The kind of buckler Muratori is here speaking of, might have been originally

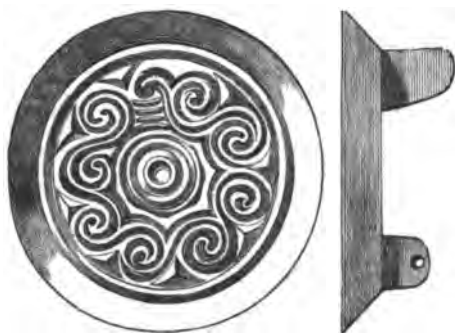
* A pair of these concave fibulæ were amusingly catalogued by the auctioneer at the great Stowe sale, and sold as *antique scales*!

^b A similar bead was found at Watermore, Cirencester.

^c Dissert. 26.

introduced by the Teutonic tribe of Lombards in Italy. Had more of the bronze studs (Pl. x. fig. 6) been found, I should have imagined they had formed a decorative circle round the rim of the shield. These, however, are much corroded, and the rest may have perished. The shield appears to have been of wood, from the fact of some fibres still adhering to the inside edge of the boss. The depth of the rivets shows the wood to have been very thin, most probably for the purpose of lightness, and the outside heads of the four rivets on the rim of the boss appear to have been lackered. A little wood, also, still remains in the ferrule of the spear.

By another skeleton was a red ochrous substance. By the head of a female were two bronze ear-rings (Pl. ix. fig. 5), and a great number of small amber beads. By the hands was a larger bead, plain, of the greenish glass, which



seems, from its rare occurrence, to have been highly prized. On either breast was a very perfect fibula, bronze gilt, and a plain ring of thin white metal round a finger joint. This skeleton lay partly under the existing road, which, in consequence, we were forced to take up. Beneath another skeleton was a small vessel of very porous black earthenware, pronounced to be indubitably of Saxon manufacture (Pl. vii. fig. 1). Unfortunately, it has been damaged by the pickaxe of

the labourer. It is a precious relic, for it is the only tolerably perfect vessel yet found, except one rather larger, too decomposed to be moved. The labourers, after holding a consultation, came to the satisfactory conclusion that these vessels were a teapot and sugar-basin of the ancients; and having taken up this idea gravely, it will, beyond a doubt, swell their stock of traditionary events. Other fibulæ and beads (Pl. iv.) were subsequently found. Among the latter is a large piece of amber, in its rough, natural form; one of the substance termed Kimmeridge coal or shale, and one of rock crystal, cut accurately in squares (Pl. iv. fig. 1). These are all above an inch and a half in diameter, and were by the hands of skeletons; which would lead one to suppose they were considered as amulets, and deposited with the corpse as a necessary funeral rite. Animals'

teeth, too, were frequently found. I have also a fragment of an armlet of ivory,—perhaps that of the sea-horse. This, too, was shattered to pieces in the digging. One solitary coin of Gallienus was found, perforated with two holes, for wearing as an ornament, or talisman, as even at this day may be noticed among the lower classes in some parts of Italy. The reverse of this coin bears *Libero* and a panther. A coin of Tacitus, with two glass beads on a wire ring, was found in a Frankish grave near Cologne, and is figured in Vol. ii. Pl. xxxv. of the “*Collectanea Antiqua*.” These are now in the collection of Lord Londesborough. There is also a very remarkable fibula, of bronze, silvered, in the shape of a bird (Pl. iii. fig. 7). These bird-shaped fibulæ are very uncommon, and have been found in Frankish graves near the Rhine, at Selzen, and Nordendorf. There is a large fibula, particularly interesting, which had been broken, and holes pierced, probably for the purpose of attaching the parts together. This fibula, as well as two other circular and cup-shaped, are bronze gilt, ornamented with grotesque faces, and marks which closely resemble Oriental characters (Pl. iii. figs. 2 and 5). Two small oblong ornaments of bronze gilt, bearing similar characters, deeply cut, were by the wrists of a skeleton, and clearly had belonged to bracelets (Pl. ix. fig. 3). The objects represented in Pl. ix. figs. 16, 17, 18, 19, were found with a child’s skeleton, and are of copper. Fig. 18 was considerably longer; and I fancied it a sort of belt: but the bones had nearly perished, and all form was lost. There were several objects like fig. 16. I take them to be ornamental studs belonging to some article of dress. If the basis is not white metal, these studs have been tinned or silvered.

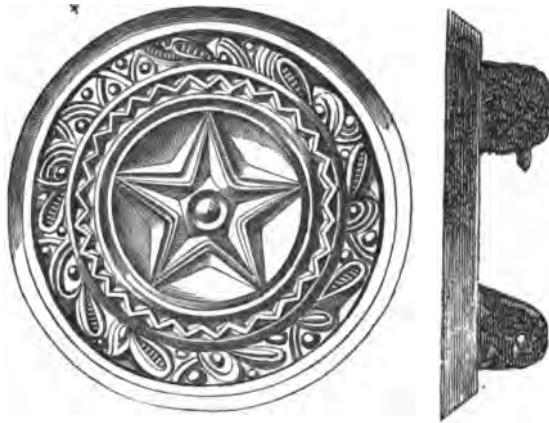
During the first excavations of 1844–5, thirty-six skeletons were found,—that is, enumerated by the men: I believe there were many more. With them were fibulæ; numbers of beads; bosses of shields; an ivory armlet or bracelet, formed of separate pieces; a serrated ring with a chain attached; a crystal ball; and many things which are now lost, and only live in the difficult descriptions of the rude finders. Also a bronze bowl (Pl. viii. fig. 1), some spear-heads, and a long and very heavy broad-sword, three feet in length and two inches and three quarters wide at the fort. The scabbard ornaments of bronze remain attached. This has been the only sword hitherto discovered (Pl. iii. fig. 3).

A curious bronze ring, found at this period, is represented (Pl. v. fig. 7). Two more will be found in Pl. ix. figs. 1 and 2, one of which resembles a miniature torques. Common fibulæ are also shown (Pl. vi. figs. 1 and 2), and

the handsome one* (Pl. iii. fig. 1), of which a pair were found then; and I have since met with another pair. It would seem, that at this first discovery they had hit on the richest part of the ground. Many interesting relics perished at this period, and for whatever remains we are indebted solely to Mr. Vines, of Fairford. The persons of influence, who might have preserved everything, unfortunately "cared for none of these things." I have seen some of the beads, bosses of shields, &c. which had found their way to the rubbish-shops of Cheltenham and Cirencester, and were there purchased. The labourers told me they threw away many things, till their attention was aroused by chancing to follow up an entire skeleton, and, even after this, they could not afford to waste their time in careful examination and collection. The excavations are, for the present, suspended. Up to this time, January 1851, the graves opened are above eighty in number, including those of children. Iron knives were usually found in every grave by the necks and ribs of the skeletons.

February. Excavations renewed.

6th. Received a summons to-day, in the form of "We have found a man." A very perfect skeleton was lying with head to south-west. On each breast was



a large cup-shaped fibula, richly ornamented and gilt, in capital preservation. On a left-hand finger were two plain rings, such as gipsies wear, of white metal. By the hip was a large amber bead, and about the body a great number of amber and various kinds of glass beads; also six ferrules of white metal, which perhaps may have been worn strung with the beads (Pl. ix. fig. 4). By the head were several short pieces of bronze (Pl. ix. figs. 13 and 14), which would appear to have

belonged to the scabbard of a dagger. Two fragments of the iron blade were with them, and the bronze object shown Pl. v. fig. 9, it is difficult to conceive its application. The most curious relic was a yellowish glass vessel, of singular con-

* A sketch of this is also given in Akerman's Archæological Index, pl. xv. fig. 31.



GLASS VASE.

struction, lying behind the head (Pl. i.) It was sadly fractured, and was probably not entire when buried here, as very much of it is still wanting, after a long search for the fragments. Glass vessels have not unfrequently been found in Saxon graves,^a but such embossed vases are exceedingly rare; so rare, indeed, that Mr. Apsley Pellatt, not aware of the circumstances under which it was found, thought it much less ancient than it really is, from its close resemblance to mediæval Italian manufacture. A very similar vase exists in the Canterbury Museum, said to have been found at Reculver; and it is unaccountable that so little notice should have been taken of so remarkable a glass till the present moment. Another of the same description was found in a grave with a human skeleton, at Castle Eden, Durham. It is described^b as of a light greenish colour, like that of Florence flasks; the rough edges of blue glass, more opaque than the other parts, and the projections hollow. This cup is engraved in "Archæologia." A fine specimen occurred also in the Frankish graves at Selzen, before mentioned. These appear to be the sole known existing specimens of so singular a manufacture. It must be remarked that, though all these closely resemble each other in the quality of glass, and the distinguishing hollow projections, yet each retains its own peculiarity of form. The Selzen vase is a trifle higher than that found here, and a sketch of it is given (Pl. viii. fig. 2), which may be useful for the purpose of comparison. It is termed in Lindenschmit's work,^c "Bei weitem der kunstvollste aller zahlreich hier gefundenen Becher, und überhaupt, mit Ausnahme der römischen, das merkwürdigste Glassgefäß, welches in unserer Provinz noch zu Tage kam."

The question now arises, Are these vessels of Saxon manufacture?

We learn from Bede that the art of making glass was unknown in England, even in sheets for church windows, till about A.D. 680, when St. Benedict, Abbot of Wearmouth and Jarrow, "misit legatorios Galliam, qui vitri factores, artifices videlicet Britannis eatenus incognitos, ad cancellandas Ecclesias, porticumque et cœnaculorum ejus fenestras, adducerent. Factumque est, et venerunt. Nec solum postulatum opus compleverunt, sed et Anglorum ex eo gentem hujusmodi artificium nosse ac discere fecerunt."

We may hence safely infer that whatever knowledge of the art the Saxons may have once possessed, was extinct before Bede's time, though it was still

^a "Archæological Index," Pl. xiv., figs. 3 to 15.

^b "Archæologia," vol. xv. pl. xxxvii.

^c "Todtenlager bei Selzen," p. 6.

existing for the manufacture of sheet glass in France, and, perhaps, also in Italy. The art of glass-making is enumerated among other secrets of the eighth century in a very curious and ancient Lucchese MS., referred to by Muratori.^a I do not, however, remember to have met with any glass manufactures in Italian museums in any way resembling these vases. Certainly one would suppose this art far more likely to have survived in Italy, the seat of the arts, than in any ultramontane region; and yet the circumstance of the famous green glass dish of St. Peter's, passing in the belief of the faithful for an emerald patina, a holy relic of the Last Supper, would seem to attest the excessive rarity of glass, at least in the form of vessels. "Pier Damiano," says Muratori,^b "scrive nella vita 'di Sant' Odilone, che gli fu donato, da Arrigo I. fra gl' Imperadori, '*Vas 'holovitream valde pretiosum, et Alexandrini operis arte compositum,*' Più di "sotto egli rammenta, '*Vitrea vascula analypha fusilitate cœlata.*'" This passage would show that, though glass at this period—perhaps about A.D. 1000—had long been manufactured for church windows, yet that glass vessels were still sufficiently rare and valuable for a German emperor to select from his treasures as a present to a French saint. The barbarous Latin, "*Vitrea vascula analypha 'fusilitate cœlata,*" seems very much to describe this Fairford cup. What, then, are we to think when we meet with vessels of such elegant form, delicate material, and difficult construction interred, hundreds of years previously, in Saxon and Frankish graves? I believe nothing can warrant a suspicion that such vessels are of direct Roman manufacture, but this expiring Roman art may have lingered awhile, as a mystery, in some early Teutonic hands,—"*excedens terris 'vestigia fecit.*"

That a great authority should hastily deem this glass Venetian, though there is, indeed, a strong resemblance, shows the great importance of personal superintendence in matters of antiquarian research, so that no shadow of doubt as to authenticity may arise. When auctioneers describe concave fibulæ as antique scales, the mistake is apparent, and little harm done; but this glass once set down in a collection as Venetian by such authority, it would, most probably, have always passed for Venetian; the rarity affords so little opportunity for comparison. From this cause, perhaps, the Reculver vase, in the Canterbury Museum, has been often passed by, owing to misgivings as to its authenticity. Mr. Roach Smith, with his usual accuracy, seems alone to have entertained a correct opinion on the subject.

^a Vide p. 31.

^b "Dissert." 24.



BRONZE FIBULA.

It must be observed, moreover, that, in addition to this knowledge of the art, an acquaintance with the difficult chemical process of colouring glass is also evinced: in this instance the colour has been obtained from iron.

Feb. 14. Five more skeletons found, but nothing further with them than the heads of a dart and spear (Pl. xi. figs. 5 and 6).

25. Two skeletons found. By one was a very perfect umbo and spear-head (Pl. xi. fig. 2). The spear had been laid upon the body, as we found fibres of the wood adhering to the bones. The head of this skeleton was of a most extraordinary size of the elongated form, "big enough for two," as a labourer exclaimed; but, like nearly all the rest, it fell to pieces on being touched.

By the other was a bronze object, use unknown (Pl. v. fig. 6).

March 3. These excavations going on but slowly, I got leave to open fresh ground adjacent; the owner wisely perceiving the benefit the soil would derive from the deep trenching. We found to-day no less than six skeletons, but very few relics were with them, except a pair of fibulæ (Pl. v. fig. 2), till the last, with which was a very perfect double fibula (Pl. ii.) on the breast, and a beautiful crystal amulet bead by the hand.

4. Found three more, the last of which was remarkable. It was lying on its side. By the skull was a spear-head (Pl. xi. fig. 7) and a number of strips of copper, measuring, when put together, about seven feet. These are quite plain, and so well preserved, that the metal still retains its elasticity. They may have been the bands of a wooden vessel now perished. By the left arm was a knife and a pair of shears (Pl. xii. fig. 2). An umbo was at the knees, and at the feet was a circular bronze bowl, with an iron handle, which was quite perfect, but broke on removal. It measured ten inches deep, and six in diameter, and is figured in the "Collectanea Antiqua," vol. ii. p. 160. It is larger, and differs something in shape from the one found previously. By the head of another, under the bottom of a broken vessel, of grey pottery, was a thin piece of iron, very much in the form of a miniature horse-shoe (Pl. xii. fig. 5).

6. Three more skeletons found. The same sort of bronze strips were by the head of one, and a number of triangular objects of the same metal (Pl. xii. fig. 6). At the time I imagined these to have been part of a head-dress of some sort; but, most probably, they were but the ornamented bands of a wooden drinking vessel. "Equally common in our Saxon graves are the remains of " wooden pails, or buckets, banded with brass hoops, and occasionally ornamented

“with triangular pieces of metal.”^a By the hips was a lump of iron, seven ounces in weight, and an iron ferrule of a staff at the feet.

7. Four more found. One with fibulæ, and a large crystal bead. Another with remains of a belt fastening of tinned metal, with a small pattern on it. This and a similar specimen from another grave are shown (Pl. v. figs. 8 and 10).

A broad spear (Pl. xi. fig. 4) was by the head, also a knife; and by the arm a perfect pair of bronze tweezers, still elastic, and fit for use (Pl. ix. fig. 6). An umbo was at the knees, and a ferrule, probably the end of the spear-staff, (*σάυραρη*) at the feet (Pl. xi. fig. 8).

The other grave was, perhaps, the most interesting we have yet found. It contained the remains of a warrior, measuring six feet six inches in length. The bones were very large.^b By the skull was a knife; and what I suppose to have been a drinking-cup formed of staves of oak, bound together with three bands of brass (Pl. viii. fig. 3). The whole was sadly decayed, but still hung together, and we were able to remove it. It is wonderful that a wooden vessel should have existed at all for so many centuries, in this wet soil. It measures four inches in diameter and three in height. By the right arm were a pair of tweezers still elastic; by the hips, a blueish green glass amulet bead, the edge of which was cut in a running pattern as a matrix to receive a reddish paste (Pl. iv. fig. 3). The glass beads of this colour must have been highly prized, if we may draw this inference from the fact of finding such, as also the crystal ones, with the remains of those only whom the other ornaments, or arms, denote to have been persons of rank or wealth. By the knees was a large umbo of the usual type we meet with here, but the projecting knob is very much larger than in general (Pl. x. fig. 4), and by the left side, between the arm and ribs, with the pommel under the arm-pit, was a very broad and long sword, *pointed*. In its corroded state it weighs two pounds and a half, and measures above two feet eleven inches in length (Pl. x. fig. 1). This sword is but the second found here, nor, as has been shown, have we met with more than one large spear or lance-head. This circumstance, coupled with the absence of all body-armour, again reminds us of the very words of Tacitus:—“*Ne ferrum quidem superest, sicut ex genere telorum conligitur. Rari gladiis, aut majoribus lanceis utuntur.*” “*Pedites et missilia spargunt.*”

^a “*Collectanea Antiqua*,” vol. ii. p. 160, q. v.

^b Vide concluding sketch.

“Paucis loricae; vix uni, alterive cassis, aut galea.”—*De Mor. Germ.* “Non lorica Germano, non galeam.”—*Annal.*

To such a conclusion might he have come after an examination of these graves, to which a very early date must be assigned, when the old German usages still prevailed. At a later period, intercourse with other nations would of necessity induce changes in arms, and mode of fighting, as we are continually witnessing at the present day. “Però anch’ essi ebbero—elmi, corazze, stivali, e il resto dell’ armatura che anticamente si usò. Carlo M. nella legge XVII., fra le Longobardiche, ordinò *ut nullus extra Regnum nostrum bruneas* (cioè le armature o corazze), *vendere præsumat*. In oltre, nella legge CLXIII. vietò il vendere, fuori del Regno, *arma et bruneas*. E nella legge XX. parla *de armis extra patriam non portandis, id est, scutis et loriciis*.”*

This type of sword is essentially Teutonic, and seems to have been in use in very early times, as also at a late period. It has been found in Saxon barrows in various parts of England, also in Livonian, Burgundian, and Frankish graves. The Scandinavian sword, too, is of the same type, though generally still heavier and longer. It answers to Plutarch’s account of the Cimbric weapon, in his life of Marius,—*Μεγαλαὶ ἐχρῶντο καὶ βαρεῖαι μαχαίραις*, and exactly corresponds to the description given by Guglielmo Pugliese of the swords of the Suevi, brought into Italy by Pope Leo IX., A.D. 1053 :—

“Hæc gens animosa feroces
Fert animos; sed equos adeò non ducere cauta.
Ictibus illorum, quam lancea, plus valet ensis,
Nam nec equus doctè manibus giratur eorum:
Nec validos ictus dat lancea; præminet ensis;
Sunt enim longi specialiter et peracuti
Illorum gladii; percussum a vertice corpus
Scindere sæpe solent; et firmo stant pede postquam
Deponuntur equis, potius certanda perire
Quàm dare terga volunt; magis hoc sunt Marte timendi,
Quàm dum sunt equites: tanta est audacia gentis.”

It has been surmised that these swords were not used for the thrust; the points, owing to the breadth of blade, appearing obtuse, and ill adapted to the purpose. Apollinarius Sidonius, however, in an account of a victory of the

* Muratori, “Dissert.” 26.

Franks, over the Goths, seems to dispose of this question: "*Alii hebetatorum cæde gladiatorum latera dentata pernumerant. Alii cæsim atque punctim foraminatos circulos loricarum metiuntur.*"^a

Fragments of the wooden scabbard still adhered to the blade, and also some vestiges of leather. There were, also, some remains of what appears to have been the clasp of the sword-belt. We obtain some account of these ancient scabbards from the Monaco di San Gallo, who, describing the dress of the old Franks, says, "*Post hæc baltheus spatæ colligatus. Quæ spatâ primo vagina fagea, secundo corio qualunque, tertio linteamine candidissimo cerâ lucidissima roborato, ita cingebatur.*"^b

None of the long dagger-knives, or the battle-axes, which occur so frequently in Frankish graves, have been found here. They are indeed but sparingly met with in England, and the circumstance is contradictory. It is at least curious to observe the words of Widichindus as to the knives,—"*Erat illis diebus Saxonibus longorum cultellorum usus, quibus usque hodie Angli utuntur, morem gentis antiquæ sectantes . . . Cultelli autem nostra lingua *saxs* dicuntur; ideoque aiunt quidem Saxones nuncupatos.*"

So, too, Gotfridus Viterbiensis,—

"*Ipsæ brevis gladius apud illos Saxo vocatur,
Unde sibi Saxo nomen peperisse notatur.*"

Mention is again made of them in the "*History of Gregory of Tours,*" as "*cultri validi, quos vulgo Scramasaxos vocant.*" Future researches in the settlements of the Saxons proper may, perhaps, elucidate this point.

That the battle-axe also was a Saxon war-weapon, and used at the battle of Hastings, we have positive historical evidence.^c These Fairford graves, indeed, would seem to bear a very early date; and the use of the battle-axe may have been introduced among the Anglo-Saxons at a much later period. Perhaps they borrowed it from their Scandinavian invaders and persecutors. So the bow, despised by the Anglo-Saxons before the Norman invasion, became, very soon after, the national weapon. The only types of *umbones* met with here are the two figured in Pl. x. In such investigations it seems most desirable to atten-

^a Lib. iii. Ep. 3.

^b De Reb. Gest. Caroli M. Lib. i. cap. 36.

^c William of Malmesbury, "*Chronique de Normandie,*" etc.

tively consider the prevailing type of arms and ornaments, or any peculiar circumstance sufficiently general to enable us to decide such to have been an established custom of the people whose remains lie before us. These, in fact, may have been the distinctive marks of each tribe; for there is little doubt that the great divisions of invaders we classify as Angle, Saxon, and Jute, were formed of many and varying tribes, who coalesced for the common purpose of conquest. There is no need of entering into long details; it will be evident to all who examine the results of any considerable sepulchral research, that some one type, in arms or ornaments, or both, prevails, and in something differs from such objects found elsewhere. Here it may be remarked the fibulæ found with the remains of persons of condition were, for the most part, of the concave or cup-shaped type, and universally found on the *breasts*, generally in pairs, one on either breast, but sometimes both on one breast. Only two of the large double fibulæ have been found (Pl. ii. and iii.), and these, perhaps, designated the military or social rank of their possessor.*

Perhaps in this early practice of depositing the weapons of the deceased in his grave, we may recognise the germ of the after-custom of suspending arms and banners over knightly tombs, and even of the present use of escutcheons in churches.

March 8th. Three more skeletons found with fibulæ and beads. A pair of these fibulæ, bronze gilt, are very ornamental, and resemble some found in Ireland; the pin being moveable, playing on the fibula itself, which represents a double-headed snake (Pl. v. fig. 5.) Perhaps this is a direct imitation of the Roman. The snake is Pliny's Amphisbœna, "Geminum habet caput, tanquam parum esset uno ore effundi venenum." A third is flatter, and has been clumsily altered, or repaired (Pl. vi. fig. 7).

By another remarkably perfect female skeleton were the remains of a child. Two small, plain, button-shaped fibulæ were on the breasts, and a quantity of

* Since writing the above, I am the more confirmed in this opinion, after inspecting the fine collection of Saxon relics from the Wilbraham cemetery, Cambridgeshire, exhibited by the Hon. R. C. Neville to the Society of Antiquaries, January 15. The prevailing type of the numerous fibulæ is the long shape, discovered also at Stowe Heath, Suffolk; near Peterborough; and in other places in that part of the country. Out of the very great numbers of all sizes exhibited, but four or five were of the type I have termed double fibulæ, and none were cup-shaped.

A far higher state of art is manifest in the Fairford fibulæ. On the other hand, very few urns were found at Fairford, and those of a common description; while at Wilbraham they are said to be exceedingly numerous and ornamental.

charcoal ashes at the head, among which was a small iron hook, evidently used for hanging a vessel over fire (Pl. xii. fig. 8). Came to a spot which caused us much delay in the excavations. It was an accumulation of rich soil, about three feet deep, in which were interspersed fragments of pottery, bones, animals' teeth, &c., that had mostly undergone the action of fire. The only human remains were the ashes of an infant among the fragments of a very coarse, earthen urn (Pl. vii. fig. 2); and a small skeleton with plain fibulæ, and a rough piece of uncut, perforated crystal. The subsoil had been removed, and the under-lying rock had at some period served as a path, being worn by the feet, and having assumed the black hue natural to this stone on exposure to the weather. This road or track runs into the adjoining ground, and might be worth following up. I was inclined to think it a hollow way, which must have been filled up, whenever the field became cultivated, by levelling the tumuli.

I opened more ground at some distance from this spot, but only found two skeletons. It seemed the limit of the cemetery in that direction; but this is, of course, uncertain.

We found much broken Saxon and Roman pottery, animals' teeth and horns, very many burnt stones, &c. The ground had clearly been disturbed. One kind of pottery, of a fine, reddish-brown stoneware, was new to me. I am told it has not been noticed at Cirencester. There were two fragments of a Roman maker's stamp, "MANUS F." The teeth of animals were those of the horse, ox, hog, and sheep.

March 29. Two skeletons found on the mason's ground, and again, *under these*, two more. The only relics with them was a quantity of the scorix from iron smelting, which, at some remote former period, was carried on extensively at Cirencester. On some ground in the vicinity of that town, I am told, the scorix are abundantly found; but there are no such indications at Fairford. It would seem that the scorix in these graves had been procured at Cirencester, or elsewhere, and deposited as a funeral rite. It is difficult to imagine what ceremonies were practised at these interments; but, certainly, they entailed the use of fire. In every grave we meet with large stones that have undergone the action of fire; and as this stone rubble becomes red on being burnt, the appearance of stones of a ruddy hue is an infallible and cheering indication, while excavating, that the object of research is at hand. Fragments of pottery regularly occur of seven or eight varieties,—red, black, grey, brown, and white; and sometimes specimens of all these are in one grave. This pottery, for the most part, appears to be Roman;

even fragments of the Samian, and imitated Samian, ware occur. These are, however, always fragments of different vessels; and few of them, in any way, appertain to each other. Could the fragments be found to re-unite, and form perfect vessels, we might infer, as has been suggested, that such had been used for funeral libations, broken, and cast into the grave. But, as has been seen, we have but rarely found that the pieces correspond; and then the vessel has been of Saxon, not Roman, manufacture. One, then, is led to suppose these many and various fragments of Roman *ficilia* were procured elsewhere, to be placed in the graves—for what purpose? This strange admixture in these graves reminds us of the burial proposed for poor Ophelia:—

“ She should in ground unsanctified have lodg’d
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her.”

Can, indeed, this passage refer to the old practices of pagan Saxon burial, Christian rites being denied to suicides?

As to the stones in the graves that have undergone the action of fire, the following passage from Herodotus may, perhaps, be thought to throw some light on so obscure a circumstance, not that it is intended to assert it absolutely accounts for it: *Λιθοὺς ἐκ πυρὸς διαφανέας ἰσβάλλουσι ἐς σκάφην.*—*Melpomene*, C. 73.

Herodotus is here describing the ceremony of purification attendant on the funeral rites of the Scythians in Europe. We at least learn, while we are perplexed with the occurrence of burnt stones in Saxon graves, that it formed part of Scythian funeral usages to burn stone. If any connexion be further supposed to exist between the Teutonic tribes and the Scythians of Herodotus, the matter becomes very interesting. His Scythia is a very vague term, but it possibly may have embraced within its limits the most northern of the Teutonic tribes. Whether, however, their mission to the West was then so far fulfilled, or they are then to be looked for as sojourning awhile in Iran, under the name of the agricultural *Γερμανιοι*, does not much matter. Doubtless, in their long course through the wilds of Asia, from their probable Himalayan homes to the shores of the Baltic, the Teutons must, of necessity, have intermingled much with the true Scythian hordes, and acquired many of their manners and customs. In the early age of geographical inquiry Herodotus would easily class them together; even in almost recent times we have seen much learning wasted in the attempt to prove Celts and Germans to be one and the same people.

I have attentively observed the position of the skeletons, and find, as a rule, they were interred with head to the south. The variation, in some few cases, has been, perhaps accidentally, to the south-east; and one, that with the bird-fibula, was lying, I am told, due east and west. The graves are generally found in rows, in regular order. This fact, in addition to the interments of women and children, tends to prove this the accustomed burial-place of some tribe of Saxons or Angles, and not merely a chance spot, where the victims of some fray found their last resting-place.

It may not be out of place to remark, that in such excavations it is desirable to obtain men accustomed to the work, or, at least, to deep draining, by which they become acquainted with the nature and peculiarities of the soil. Common labourers are useless. The experienced hands become as knowing as the French soldiers are said to have been in Spain, during the war, in search for buried treasure. They can tell in a moment by sight, sound, and feel, where the ground has been once disturbed; and much time is often hereby saved, especially in this description of soil. Where the subsoil is chalk, these researches are far more easily made. These graves afford a convincing proof of the great agricultural advantage of deep trenching. The soil, after so many centuries, still remains hollow, and the roots of trees pass through, as through a prepared channel.

Altogether, up to this period, March 29, more than one hundred and twenty graves had been examined, at the opening of forty of which I had been present myself. The attendant circumstances were detailed, from time to time, to Mr. Roach Smith, who brought them under the notice of the Society of Antiquaries, and his paper was published, with illustrations, in the Society's "Archæologia." Mr. R. Smith's great experience and research render all his remarks so interesting and valuable, that I am happy in having his permission to transfer them to these pages, for the benefit of such readers as may not have ready access to the "Archæologia."

"The above is Mr. Wylie's statement, bringing the discoveries down to the 29th of March. It should be remarked, that a brief notice was given of those made in 1844-5, in vol. ii. of the 'Journal of the British Archæological Association,' with engravings of two bosses of shields, a fibula, and the sword (Pl. iii. fig. 3). The last of these was engraved from a defective drawing, and incorrectly described as bronze; whereas it is of iron, but the upper and lower parts of the sheath were edged with bronze, which still adheres to the sword.

"This sword, the blade of which measures two feet seven inches and a half,



Anglo-Saxon Remains found at Fairford, C^o Gloucester:

Published by the Society of Antiquaries of London, 25th April 1830.

A. R. Smith del. et sculp.

“ and the handle four inches and a half, appears to be somewhat more rounded
 “ at the end than the generality of the Saxon swords which have been found in
 “ Kent and other places; but it is probably not so in reality. The scabbard
 “ has been protected with a bronze rim at the top and bottom,—a pecu-
 “ liarity which I have noticed in other examples found in Gloucestershire and
 “ Worcestershire.

“ If we compare this sword with the engraving of one found at Londinières,
 “ near Dieppe, engraved in the ‘*Révue de Rouen*,’ Fév. 1848, we shall find that,
 “ although the scabbard was rounded, the sword itself is perfectly pointed. The
 “ example referred to in every respect seems to resemble that from Fairford.
 “ The other sword found by Mr. Wylie, without the scabbard ornaments, is of the
 “ same dimensions, and *pointed*.

“ The large fibula (Pl. iii. fig. 2) of bronze gilt, and another from Fairford,
 “ closely resembling it, are very similar to that found in the Saxon burial-place
 “ at Marston Hill, in Northamptonshire;^a to one found at Badby, in the same
 “ county;^b and to others found in Yorkshire.^c A portion of one, of very large
 “ size, found near Leicester, is preserved in the museum of that city. To the
 “ same class belong specimens found at Selzen,^d near Mayence, and one preserved
 “ in the Wiesbaden Museum, to the lower end of which is attached an oblong
 “ bead, and a large globular substance, apparently jet. Circular concave fibulæ
 “ were also found at Marston Hill, the pattern on one of which accords with that
 “ on a specimen from Fairford, and also on one of the three fine examples found
 “ in Oxfordshire, which I recently exhibited to the Society, and which are now in
 “ the museum of Lord Londesborough. Other varieties have been found in
 “ Buckinghamshire, in Berkshire, and in Warwickshire. Fig. 5 of our Plate
 “ seems the counterpart of a pair found in a barrow at Oddington, near Stow-in-
 “ the-Wold, in Gloucestershire,^e with other remains analogous to those discovered
 “ at Fairford. It also resembles one found in a barrow on Shalcombe Down,
 “ Isle of Wight.^f Fig. 6 of our Plate belongs to another variety of the former
 “ class, many of which have been found in Suffolk, Norfolk, and Northampton-
 “ shire, as well as in some other counties; and fig. 7 reminds us of the late

^a “*Archæologia*,” vol. xxx. pl. xiii.

^b “*Journal of Brit. Arch. Assoc.*” vol. i. p. 61.

^c “*Journal of Brit. Arch. Assoc.*” vol. ii. p. 311.

^d “*Das Germanische Todtenlager bei Selzen*,” von W. and L. Lindenschmit. 8vo. Mainz, 1848.

^e “*Gentleman's Magazine*,” April 1787, pl. ii. fig. 9.

^f “*Transactions of the Brit. Arch. Assoc. at Winchester*,” pl. iii. fig. 2.

" Roman fibulæ in the form of birds, as well as of some found in Saxon burial-places in the Isle of Wight,* and in Frankish graves on the Rhine.^b Fig. 4 is to me a new type. The guilloche pattern is evidently a copy of that common Roman ornament; and the interior pattern has also probably been suggested from some classical design, such as those in the Roman tessellated pavements, from which I think many of the Saxon ornaments were originally taken.

" The glass goblet, or cup, mentioned by Mr. Wylie, can scarcely be described without the aid of an engraving. It resembles one in the Canterbury Museum, stated to have been found at Reculver, and one engraved on page 6 of the Messrs. Lindenschmit's discoveries made at Selzen, before referred to.

" The object discovered on the 6th of March is probably the band of a small coffer or box. Mr. Wylie has forwarded to me a copper bowl found in one of the graves, which resembles precisely that figured in Nichols's 'Leicestershire,' vol. i. part ii. p. 136, in the plate of Saxon remains dug up in Queneborow field. I have also received from Mr. Wylie three small brass coins, exclusive of that of Gallienus; two are of Valens and Gratian; the other, which is illegible, has been perforated for wearing as an ornament."^c

Of the fibulæ engraved in the accompanying plate, 1, 2, 4, 5, are bronze, gilt; 4 being of the concave type, and silvered, or tinned at the back; 1, 4, 5, were found in pairs; 6 and 7 are of bronze; the back of the latter also having been tinned or silvered.

The bronze scabbard ornaments attached to the sword have also been gilt.

April 29. Began fresh excavations.

Found the ground had been extensively moved; and I suspect this grave had been formerly ransacked.

30. Found three small vessels of thin common red ware, filled with burnt bones. By these was a small female skeleton. A bronze armlet was still round the arm-bone, and some beads by the hips. This was buried deep, and by it, at a still greater depth of three feet and a half, was a male skeleton, with which nothing but some animal's teeth and a Roman tile were found. This grave was made with great care, and walled in up to the surface, by stones set on each other edgewise. This is the first attempt I have noticed here to protect the body in any way.

* "Transactions of the Brit. Arch. Assoc. at Winchester," pl. iii. fig. 11.

^b "Collectanea Antiqua," vol. ii. pl. xxxv.

^c "Archæologia," vol. xxxiv. p. 77.

May 7. A small skeleton found, and with it a fragment of a light-coloured mortarium. Near this a very large skeleton was lying.

8. Came on the termination of a grave, which we could not follow up, as the rest was under a pile of stones. Found here a part, as usual, of a black vessel, and with it a very perfect brass coin of Allectus, which seemed to have been very little in circulation.

Obverse.

IMP. C. ALLECTUS, AUG.

Reverse.

Galley, six oars.

VIRTUS AUG.

Q. L.

Excavations continued two days longer without success.

June 13. Opened fresh ground. Found a very large skeleton with spear-head of a fresh type, measuring eleven by two inches (Pl. xi. fig. 1), and a small knife.

Remains of two more skeletons, apparently thrust into a hole without any care.

July 14. Opened fresh ground when Mr. Akerman was present. Found a small female skeleton lying nearly due east and west, being the second found in this position. With it was merely a bead-shaped bit of blue glass, and a rude brooch (Pl. vi. fig. 3), by which the mantle, or other drapery, must have been held together at the throat.

Also came on the supposed grave left May 8. This, however, only proved to be a hole, in which was a mass of unctuous-looking, bright red, burnt earth, and charcoal ashes. By it was a sort of large iron staple and pin (Pl. xii. figs. 3 and 4), with the fragments of a coarse earthen vessel, with a vandyked pattern on it, which had contained bones. It would seem that this pit was connected with some rites, perhaps sacrificial, but it is the first of the sort we have met with.

We came on a male skeleton lying on its side, and much bent. Head to south-east.

Found another in the usual position of north and south.

The greater part of the last-examined graves seem to have been of the poorer class, who were content to have their "sagum spinâ consortum," no relics being found.

The Anglo-Saxons, at this early period, must have had no little knowledge of the art of working metals, whether self-acquired, or derived from the lingering civilisation of the departed Romans. The specimens of white metal in rings, fibulæ, &c. found here, prove their acquaintance with the nature of such

amalgams. Many of the iron arms seem perfectly well wrought and true in form. But it is in the bronze fibulæ that a much higher state of the art is evinced. We here find the Weylands of this rude period able to mould copper,—the basis of all their ornamental works,—into the forms they required. Then follows the finishing their ornamental devices by the graver's skill; the richly gilding the face of their work; and the tinning or silvering the back; and the fabrication of the tempered steel pin, copper probably being found too ductile to secure the folds of their coarse garments. How many modern trades are here involved! Truly says Muratori, “*Ciò che solamente maneava a molte delle arti esercitate in “ quei secoli ignoranti era la leggiadria e perfezione creata da' Greci e Romani.*”

It seems most extraordinary that men so well skilled in the art of working in metals should have remained so long unwilling, or unable, to create a coinage of their own. For a long period they seem to have been contented with a circulation of the late Roman coins found in the island; and the early attempts at a Saxon coinage are of a very rude description.

Nor is it merely as regards their workmanship that these early fibulæ are full of interest; the designs of their ornamental tracery also deserve attention. That the German tribes in those provinces that border on the Rhine, being in nearer contact with the Romans, should have been in some degree acquainted with the objects not merely of Roman commerce, but also of decorative art, we can readily imagine. The tribes, however, who came to our shores, fresh from the sands of the Baltic, and the wilds of Scandinavia, must have gazed with intense amazement on the fresh relics of Roman art and luxury, then everywhere abounding in Britain, as on treasures now first presented to their gaze, creative of new images in minds not, even in barbarism, altogether insensible to poetry, or devoid of finer aspirations. That they would at once appreciate and preserve what they could not understand, is not to be supposed—taste with *us* is still but an exotic plant*—yet, doubtless, Roman elegance, manifested in the works of art, was not without its beneficial influence on the minds even of these barbarous Teutons.

In the devices of these fibulæ, we may often recognise ideas borrowed from the rich embellishments of the tasteful Samian ware, and the classic designs of the beautiful pavements we term Mosaic, on which the eye so loves to dwell.

* When we hear of the civic authorities of London wantonly destroying numerous tessellated pavements, and rich Samian ware, revealed by their excavations, and this not merely in ignorance, but in spite of all remonstrance, and to frustrate all research, we cannot wonder at any outrages of barbarians. Theodoric's Goths were far more conservative of Rome.

The interlacing wreath, the twining border, the scenic mask, again appear, though in a deteriorated form, and altered to the grosser genius of an uneducated people. Still the idea was created. We may trace it out again, centuries later, in many an ornamented sculptured detail of our old church architecture, and the Medusa head and tragic mask of the Roman artist often, no doubt, grin down on us, strangely metamorphosed by the grotesque fancy of the northern sculptor. In *our* various works of art we wisely seek the lines of beauty and elegance of design in the works of Greece, but the efforts of many an incongruous adulterator of Grecian taste are infinitely more ridiculous than any of these early Teutonic productions.

That they must have had a tolerable acquaintance with the art of glass-making has already been seen. We may further observe they were able to apply it to the glazing, or vitreous coating of objects, as appears from specimens of the beads. How with the instruments we may suppose them to have possessed, they succeeded in cutting deep beds in the larger glass beads, as ornamental matrices to receive the coloured composition; or how they so accurately squared the many planes of the crystal amulets, yet remains to be explained!

It is also clear they knew enough of chemistry to enable them to impart various colours to their glass; and compound and colour the *pastes*, and enamels employed in the inlaying process, which are so durable as sometimes to have survived, when the object they served to ornament has become decomposed.

In fine, Muratori's remarks on the state of the arts in Italy, when all was supposed to have been swept away by the irruption of cognate Teutonic tribes, are so applicable in the present case, that I shall transcribe the passage at full. The curious Latin extract will at least be interesting to the literary antiquary. "Noi, per l'insigne progresso che han fatto l'arti in questi ultimi secoli, ci figuriamo che i secoli barbarici giacessero in un'estrema stupidità ed ignoranza, e fossero privi d'ogni nobile ornamento. Ma nè pure allora mancò l'ingegno, e molte arti si coltivavano assai bene. Fors'anche aveano qualche segreto che a noi manca oggidì. A questo proposito ho io pubblicato un curioso pezzo dell'antichità barbarica, tratto da un codice dell'insigne Capitolo de' Canonici di Lucca, che il P. Mabillone, tanto per la forma de' caratteri, che per le Vite de' Papi terminate in Adriano I., giudicò appartenere ai tempi di Carlo M. Quel latino è scurissimo per tante voci straniere, forse accresciute dall'ignoranza dello scrittore; e vi si sente in molti luoghi anche la lingua volgare d'allora. Trattasi ivi della tintura de' mosaici, delle pelli, ec; della maniera d'indorare il ferro ed

“ altri metalli, di scrivere con oro ; di varie decozioni, e di simili altri usi e segreti
 “ di que’ tempi. Io metterò qui solamente alcuni pochi di que’ titoli.

De tictio omnium Musivorum.

De inoratione Musiborum.

De Mosibum de argento.

De Smurettas tabulas.

Decoctio Plumbi.

De Pelle alithina tinguere.

De tinctio Pellis Prasinis.

Tinctio ossuorum, et omnium cornorum, et omnium lignorum.

De Petalo auri.

De Ferrum deaurare.

De fila aurea facere.

Chrysographia.

Inauratio Pellis.

Quomodo eramen in colore auri transmutetur.

De Crisocollon.

De compositione auri picmenti.

De Littargirium.

De tictio Petalorum.

De compositio Cinnabarim, ec.

“ Non ho io veduto scrittura de’ secoli remoti ove sì senta più l’andamento
 “ della nostra lingua Italiana. E di qui poi ricaviamo che i secoli barbarici
 “ ebbero più documenti dell’ arti di quel che crediamo. Non sappiamo fin dove
 “ si stendesse il loro sapere ed industria, perchè o son perite le loro memorie,
 “ o poche ne scrissero per l’ignoranza delle Lettere.”*

The affairs of Italy, and the Germans, became so intermingled after the destruction of the Western Empire, that this state of the arts in Italy may, perhaps, also, be deemed that of her German conquerors at the same period.

That amber was highly prized we must infer from the circumstance of so frequently meeting with it in all Saxon graves, but for what purpose it was worn does not so immediately appear. Nor can we learn whether it was procured on the east coast of our own island, or was brought from the shores of the Baltic, where it still abounds, as in the days of Tacitus, and forms an article of com-

* Muratori, “Antichità Ital.” Dissert. 24.

merce. It is also found in Celtic barrows, and that it was held in esteem by the Britons, we learn from Aneurin's line,

"With wreaths of amber twined round his temples."

The decorative purposes of the many-coloured beads we can well understand, especially at a period when glass was rare and valuable, and from the positions in which we have regularly met with them here, we may assert they were worn as chaplets, necklaces, and bracelets. The Anglo-Saxons, indeed, seem, up to the Norman Conquest, to have had a great taste for disfiguring their persons with barbarous decorations.* It is difficult, however, to fancy that rough, mis-shapen pieces of unpolished amber could have been worn as adornments to the person. Hands so cunning in the working of glass and metal could surely have carved so facile a substance into more seemly form. Of the specimens here found, amounting to above one hundred and thirty, the greater part are rough pieces, merely perforated, and only some smaller ones, lying by a female skeleton, have received any attention, or attempt to round them. Perhaps some superstitious virtue was ascribed to amber in its natural state, as we know there was to crystal, and in later times to certain gems. "Omne ignotum pro mirifico," and so the value set on amber by the Romans for many purposes may have given it an importance, we know it once did *not* possess, in the eyes of the savage tribes of the north ignorant of its applications beyond the bright flame its resinous properties imparted to their fires. "Incolas pro ligno ad ignem uti eo."^b "Diu quinetiam inter cetera ejectamenta maris jacebat, donec luxuria nostra dedit nomen. Ipsi in nullo usu; rude legitur, informe perfertur, pretiumque mirantes accipiunt."^c

We gather abundantly from Pliny^d in what estimation the Romans held this fossil. It seems to have been a favourite female ornament; the imperial lover, in his sonnets, could find no more flattering emblem of the beauties of his mistress's ringlets; the superstitious mother, with jealous fondness, bound its supposed witchery around her infant; while the grave physician prescribed it in the same amulet form, or mingled it in his draughts, for many "an ill that flesh is heir to."

* William of Malmesbury.

^b Pliny.

^c Tacitus, de Mor. Germ.

^d L. 37, c. 11 and 12.

It is very possible that the electro-attractive property of amber induced much of the superstitious estimation it was held in.

Man and the elements have probably obliterated many a memorial that the founder had fondly deemed more lasting; but yet it is remarkable how little sepulchral evidence we meet with of the many generations of so many races of our predecessors in Britain. We doubtless often tread unconsciously on secret cities of the dead, whether in the form of the simple grave, the cinerary urn, or those singular tombs discovered by Mr. Akerman in Buckinghamshire.* From time to time the rock-built mausoleum of some solitary hero invites and obtains the inquiry of the antiquary, or the plough may reveal the secrets of a battle-fray—but the existence of an undisturbed necropolis is rarely ascertained. When such a discovery is made, how little real interest is excited! The idler may spend a vacant hour in gazing on the exposed secrets of the tomb, or the ignorant curiosity-hunter would fain rifle its contents to swell an indiscriminate mass of miscellanies, but it is well-nigh rare as the discovery to meet with individuals desirous of following it up, and able to appreciate it, from proper motives. Yet to us who possess such scanty remnants, material or literary, of the early history of our race, this kind of evidence should be invaluable. It is as a newly found manuscript which enables the scholar to remove the veil from the obscure events of the past, not merely by its own intrinsic information, but by the opportunity it affords of comparison elsewhere. "It is in accumulations of such facts," observes Mr. R. Smith, "we must seek for a verification or correction of our opinions on the origin or character of such remains, on their several points of resemblance to analogous objects found in different parts of this and other countries, and consequently in the connexion between the people who used them, their habits, customs, and usages."^b

Sepulchral remains throw great light on the history of those nations even who have been the most fortunate in authentic chronicles, to the truth of whose records they often afford the most convincing testimony. The singular tumulus opened in 1841, near Asterabad,^c strongly bears out the account given by Herodotus of the interments of the Scythian kings. In consequence, we attach a higher value to the other records he has left us of Scythian usages, because we now see additional reasons for conceiving them to be true. The tombs of Etruria,

* "Archæologia," vol. xxxiv. p. 21. ^b Vol. xxxiv. p. 77. ^c Vol. xxx. p. 248.

and the Romans, are full of interest and information; while those of Egypt explain the manners and customs of the people with a detail beyond the powers of the most descriptive historian. These are, indeed, the illustrations, and witnesses of history.

November 11. Resumed excavations for a week, without success, in that portion of the ground opened March 3. It proves the limit of the cemetery to have been reached on that side. In the opposite direction, there is little doubt that it extends into the adjoining field, for we found graves close to the boundary-wall. There is reason, too, to suspect it lies beneath the Quennington Road, and may be found again in the opposite enclosure. It is to be hoped, therefore, the proprietor of these lands may one day feel disposed to carry on so interesting and useful an investigation. Other spots on the manor, also, might be examined with every certainty of success; for barrows exist, skeletons and arms have been found, and coins are occasionally ploughed up. I was too late to rescue from the melting-pot a gold one thus acquired. There is certainly a belief among the peasantry that a battle was once fought, on the banks of the Coln, in the meadows now within the precincts of Fairford Park. When the cemetery was discovered, they were fortified in this belief, conceiving it to be the burial-place of the slain, and nothing will now shake their conviction of the reality of such an event. Such legendary history, handed down from father to son, is not always to be rejected as imaginary, because merely oral. One listens to such tales with interest, when told in the *patois* of the peasants, if, indeed, that may be termed *patois* which retains in their purity so many original Saxon words, and Saxon forms of speech. That in such a neighbourhood such a battle did take place, and on this very ground, too, is likely enough. Who were the contending parties is not so easily ascertained. Further discoveries may explain whether they were British tribes,—Romans and Britons; or, more probably still, Saxons and Britons. We learn from the “Saxon Chronicle,” that, A.D. 577, the Saxons overthrew the Britons in a great battle, and took from them the cities of Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath. In the absence of all further record, it can scarcely be thought to savour of romance, if we deem it possible that, after Cirencester had thus fallen to the Saxon invader, this traditionary battle was the last struggle of the British Dobuni. The legend would the more certainly have been thus retained, if this was the first occasion of the Saxon settlement here. Atkyns, in his “History of Gloucestershire,” A.D. 1712, says: “There must have been in ancient times “many considerable warlike actions in this place, for many medals and urns are

“ often dug up ; and there are several barrows raised over the slain in the adjoining fields.” Atkyns is supposed, in this work, to have availed himself of the labours of Dr. Parsons, an antiquary who preceded him. This writer has fallen into the popular error of supposing barrows to be necessarily the monuments of “ the slain ;” but his remarks prove the existence of extensive sepulchral remains here early in the last century, most of which are now obliterated. He may, indeed, refer to the very cemetery we have explored, though I am inclined to think those tumuli had previously vanished before the plough. The barrows he speaks of may have been on the summit of the Waiten Hill, close to the Cirencester Road, where skeletons and arms have since been found.

Dr. Parsons also speaks of remains found on digging the foundations of the present mansion in Fairford Park.

The whole of this region possesses great antiquarian interest, and is the very ground where one would expect to meet with memorials of the past. Midway between Fairford and Cirencester is Ranbury Camp, a very important Roman fortification, as the remains of the earth-works testify. This camp would probably have been constructed for the protection of Cirencester, and is situate between the Ermyn and Ikniel Streets, which there converge. The camp contains a level, cultivated space of some ten acres within the mounds, which have been planted, and, in some places, the fosse is almost effaced.

Another very ancient circular encampment, called Dene Camp, is on the hills, on the estate of Lord de Mauley, in the immediate vicinity of the British Ikniel Street, and Salt Way. It is on a knoll, and contains an area of about eleven acres of cultivated ground. The single fosse which surrounded it is nearly obliterated. It seems to have been formed in correspondence with the Windrush Camp, situate between Burford and Northleach, and conspicuous on a hill, about three miles distant in a straight line from this Dene camp.

Akeman Street, Ermyn and Ikniel Streets, the lower British Salt Way, and that fine old route, the Fosse Way, are all in the immediate neighbourhood of Fairford. The Ikniel Street crosses the Salt Way at Coln St. Aldwin's, about three miles distant, and unites with the Fosse Way, near Cirencester.

On the hills that bound the horizon, in the opposite direction, gleams the White Horse of Uffington, which perhaps witnessed many a Celtic rite ere Alfred fought the Danes at Ashdown, or a Saxon foot was set in Britain. The mystic horse has, however, been converted into a monument of Alfred's victory, just as the neighbouring cromlech of Ashbury has gained the Saxon appellation of Way-

land Smith's cave. The victors seem to have resolved on blotting out the Celtic name even in the national memorials of the race.

Cirencester itself is but a few miles distant, and certainly is one of the most interesting and ancient towns in England, whether as the Celtic *Caer Cori*, the Roman *Corinium*, or the Saxon *Cyrenceastre*. The different people that have held or wasted Britain, seem all to have coveted and occupied this historic town. Probably all, certainly the Romans, have left instructive memorials of their presence,—

“manchen schönen Platz,
Und manchen alt begrabnen Schatz.”^a

These, no doubt, will one day be eagerly sought for and revealed, when public feeling awakes in England, as in Denmark, to a sense of the honour and importance of claiming and *preserving* national monuments as national treasures. Till then, they are safer in the secret guardianship of the conservative earth.

^a Faust.

The Saxon Chieftain.

WRITTEN ON OPENING A SAXON GRAVE, MARCH 7, 1851.

“Of these a mighty people shortly grew,
And puissant kings, which all the world warrap’d,
And to themselves all nations did subdue.”

SPENSER.

IN Hertha’s lap the Saxon chieftain sleeps,
While she, the first, last parent of us all,
O’er her child bending, sadly silent weeps,
And round him wraps her russet robe for pall.
Still at his head the festal goblet stands,
Oft at the banquet quaffed in Woden’s name ;—
Still seeks the trenchant blade those nerveless hands
That bore it once to win a hero’s fame ;—
Still there the faithful shield, once prompt to save ;—
Alike all dull’d, and tarnish’d in the grave.

Rest, Saxon, rest ! We ’re kindred men who wreath
A friendly circle ’round thy narrow bed,
Gaze on thy giant form, and kindly breathe
A pious requiem to the noble dead.

Though ages on their wingèd flight have roll'd,
Since on life's scene thou play'dst thy pageant part,
Still sounds the Saxon tongue as erst of old,
In Saxon breasts still beats the Saxon heart.
God bless'd the empire-tree which thou didst plant,
And still will bless, and mighty increase grant.

Hath He then bless'd, and shall we not be bless'd,
Long as we love his soul-illuminating light ?
Chosen of Him to do His high behest,
Symbols of truth, and heaven-imparted might,
To farthest earth the Saxon banners wave,
Climb mountain-wilds, and ride the stormy sea !
Beneath those folds no more shall crouch the slave ;
But walk erect in manly liberty !
Justice and Mercy follow o'er the main,
With Peace and Plenty smiling in their train.

Where Asia's mountains court a sapphire sky,
And woods primeval shade the Ganges' source,
The fair-haired Teuton heard the " small, still " cry
Of Heaven impelling to a westward course.
Calmly he left the much-loved father-land,
And held through Asia's wastes his pilgrim way,
Till, with his hosts, upon the Baltic sand
Awhile he stay'd to close his fierce array ;
Then, as the avalanche in thunder hurled,
Burst from the north to renovate the world.

Far in the region of the summ'ry west
The victor saw the radiant day-star rise,
Shedding bright Hope upon that darksome breast,
As sunbeams pierce the gloom of wintry skies.

The Teuton knew his God ;—in awe he bowed ;—
The demon's serf a Christian hero rose,
Strong in his faith, to Christ's own service vowed,
And, bearing on the croceate banner, goes
Homeward, to pour—for so God's purpose wills—
The light of Heaven on Himalayan hills.

We know the truth. Blind Pagans now no more
At Hertha's shrine no victim foully bleeds ;
In forest glade, or on the sounding shore,
No Woden orgies fire to sanguine deeds ;—
But Hate, and Strife, and Lust,—have these no sway
O'er Saxon breasts ;—has Hell no mastery ?
Shall we Valhalla scorn, and yet allay
Our tastes on earth with grosser luxury ?
Seek we His heaven who died on cross to save,
And sadder, wiser, quit yon Saxon grave.

W. M. W.



PLATE IV.

Beads, of actual size, collected from the different graves, consisting of

Variously coloured glass, plain and ornamented.

Terra-cotta.

Clay, encrusted with coloured composition and vitreous substances.

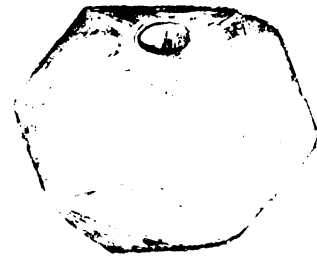
Porcelain.

Crystal.

Five small pearly white glass beads joined together. No other specimen resembling this has occurred here.

Besides these are about one hundred and fifty beads, or perforated pieces of amber, of all sizes, up to an inch and a half in diameter.

Also, above a hundred small glass beads, mostly of a dark blue or purple colour.



1.



2.



3.

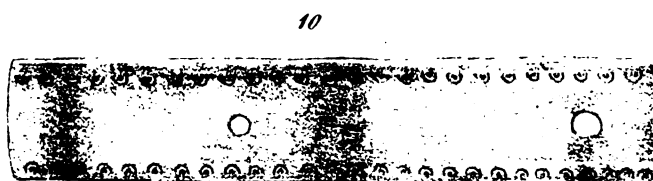
CHOC

PLATE V.

FIG.

1. \
2. }
3. Fibulæ, bronze gilt, found in pairs.
4. }
5. /
6. Bronze object, found under a skeleton ; use unknown.
7. Bronze Ring—perhaps part of a buckle.
8. }
10. } Objects of bronze, tinned, which seem to have belonged to a belt.
9. Object in bronze, found at the head of a skeleton, with fragments of some instrument of iron, of which it may have been the handle.

These objects are all of actual size.



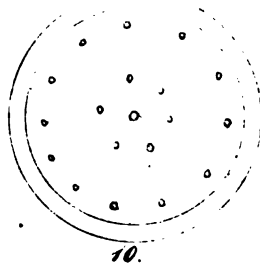
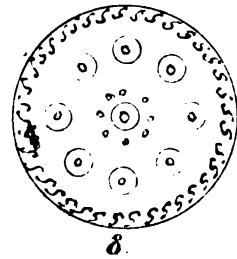
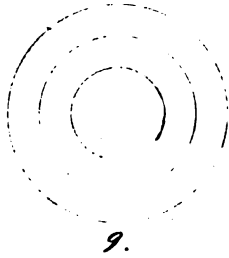
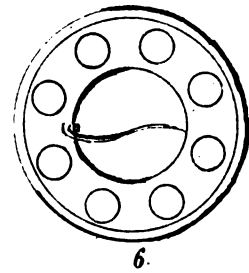
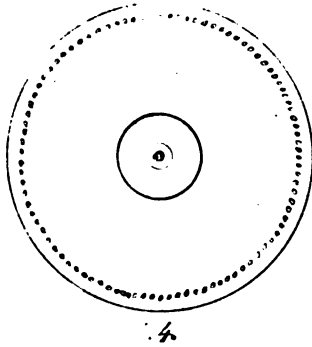
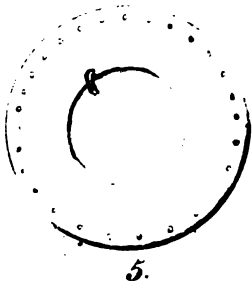
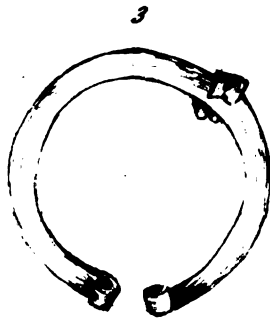
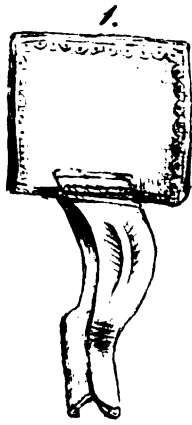
BRONZE FIBULÆ, ETC.

PLATE VI.

FIG.

- 1. } Bronze Fibulæ, of the long type.
- 2. }
- 3. Bronze Fibula found at the throat of a skeleton.
- 4. Plain bronze Fibulæ, tinned or silvered ; a pair found.
- 5. } Fibulæ, in thin white metal, found in pairs.
- 6. }
- 7. Common bronze Fibula.
- 8. }
- 9. } Plain button-like bronze Fibulæ; found in pairs.
- 10.)

Actual size.



A. W. del.

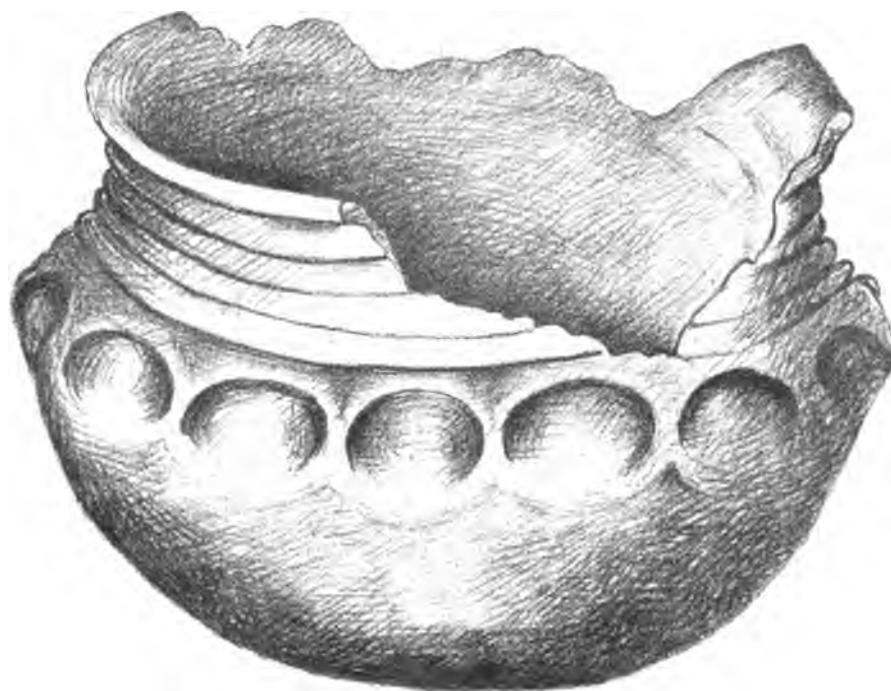
FIBULÆ

PLATE VII.

FIG.

1. Saxon Vase, of black pottery—actual size.
2. Vessel of very coarse earthen-ware, which contained the ashes of a child—half size.

1.



2.



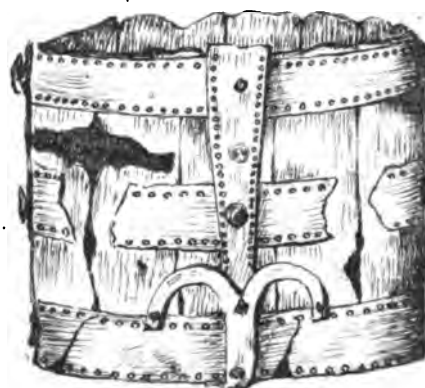
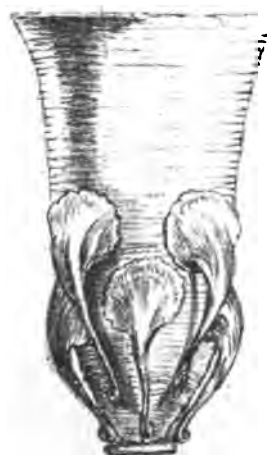
A. W. del.

POTTERY

PLATE VIII.

FIG.

1. Bronze Bowl—half size.
2. Drinking Cup, of wood, bound together with brass bands—half size. *(upside down)*
3. Glass Vase, found in a Frankish grave at Selzen, near Mayence. The original is about seven inches in height.



A. W. del.

BOWL, VASE, & DRINKING CUP.

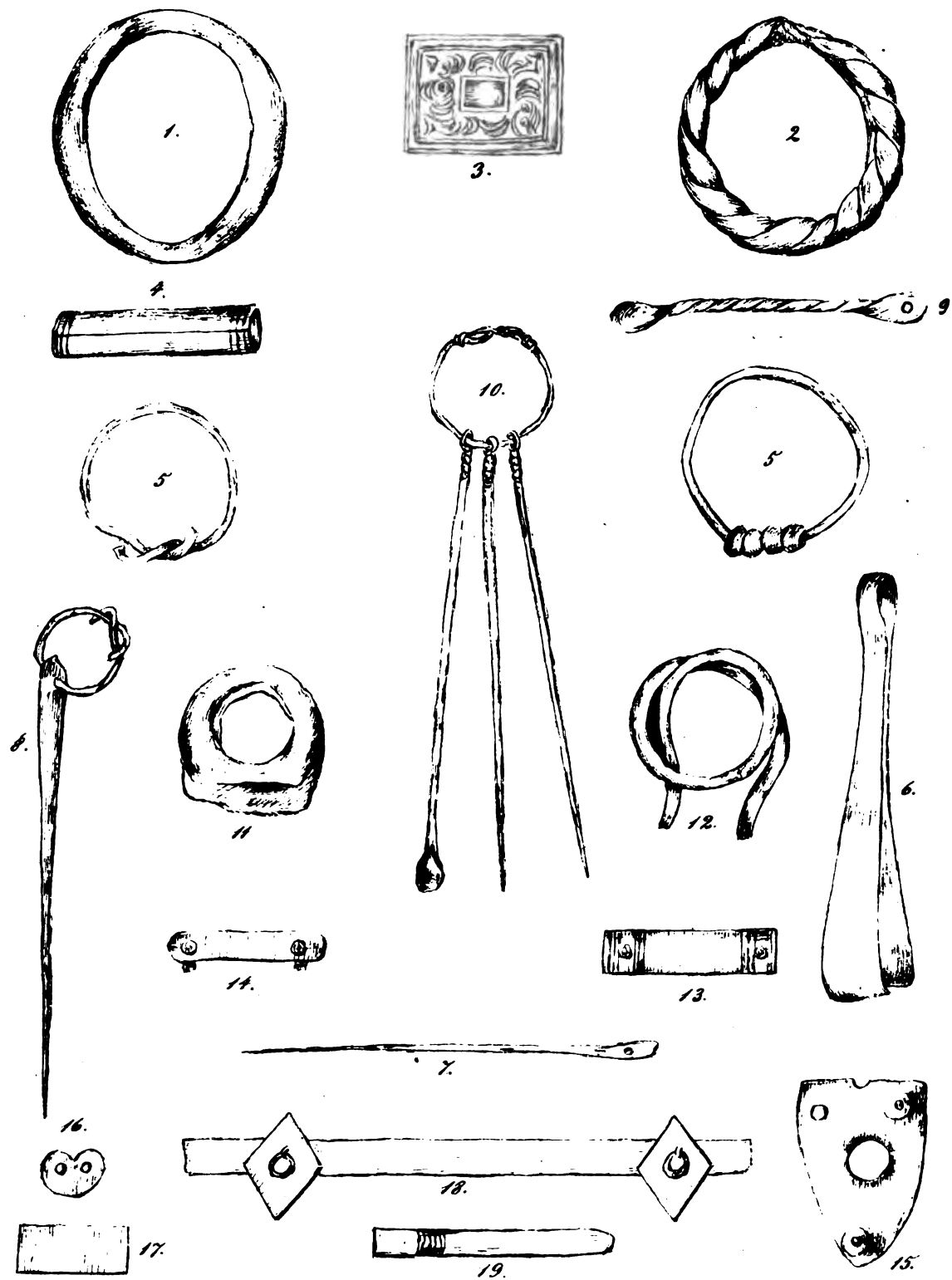
PLATE IX.

VARIOUS TOILET IMPLEMENTS AND ORNAMENTS.

FIG.

1. } Bronze Rings.
2. }
3. Richly gilt and ornamented bronze Stud of a Bracelet. A pair found by the wrists of a skeleton.
4. Ferrule of white metal. Six of these were found intermingled with beads.
5. Bronze Ear-rings—found by a skull.
6. Tweezers.
7. Needle.
8. Hair-pin.
9. }
10. } Toilet implements.
11. Bronze Ring—top of pin or skewer.
12. Ring of twisted copper wire.
13. }
14. } Ornaments of bronze, perhaps belonging to a dagger-sheath.
15. }
- There are sixteen pieces like fig. 13—two like fig. 14.
16. }
17. }
18. } Objects of bronze found with a child's remains.
19. }

All of actual size.



A. W. del.

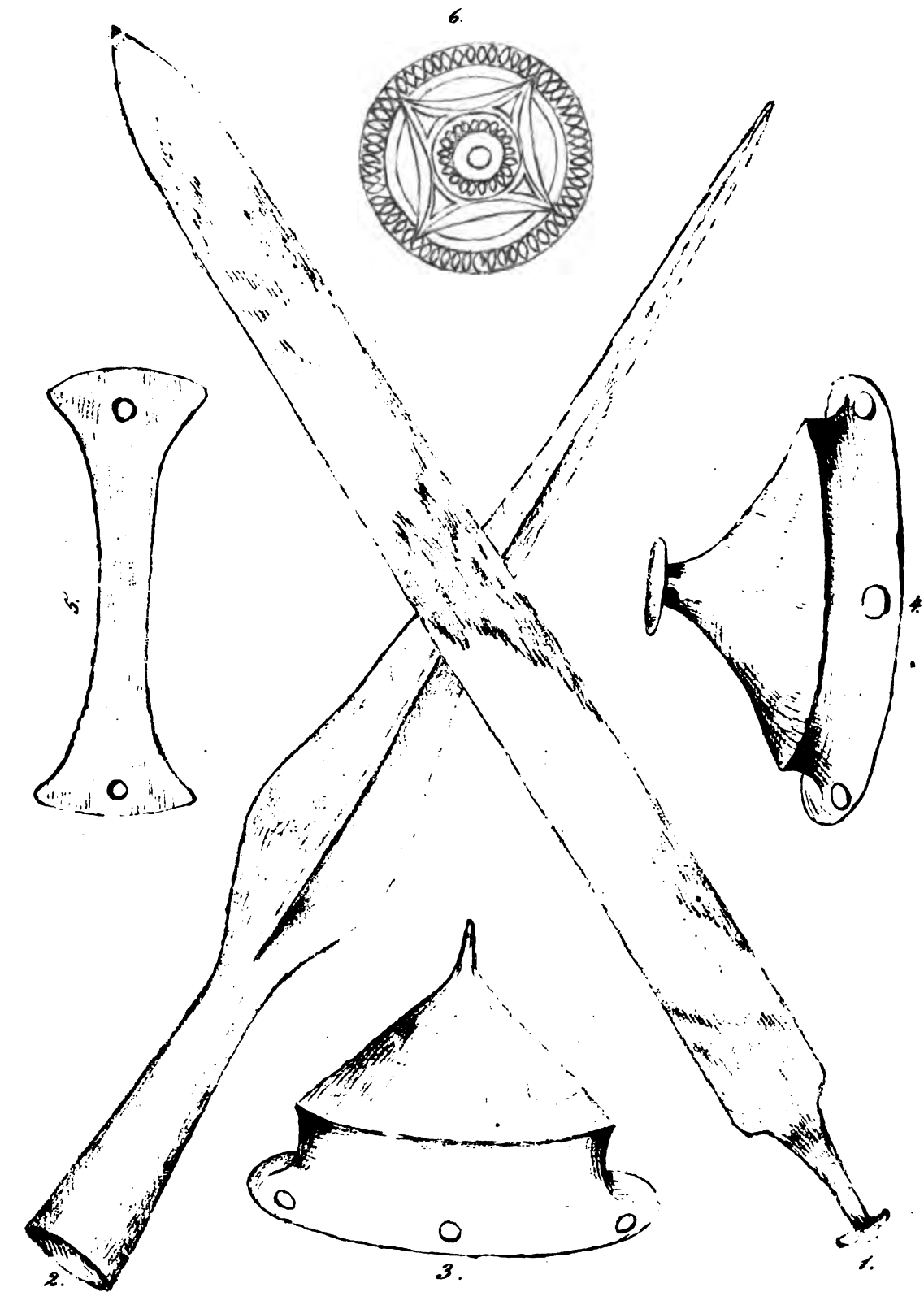
TOILET IMPLEMENTS & ORNAMENTS.

PLATE X.

ARMS.

FIG.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------|
| 1. Sword—quarter size. | } | Iron. |
| 2. Spear-head—half size. | | |
| 3. } Umbones—half size. | | |
| 4. } | | |
| 5. Shield Handle—half size. | | |
| 6. Stud of Shield—actual size—Bronze. | | |



A.W. del

ARMS.

PLATE XI.

ARMS.

FIG.

1. Seven various Types of Iron Spear-heads—half size.
2. Ferrule end of Spear-staff—half size.

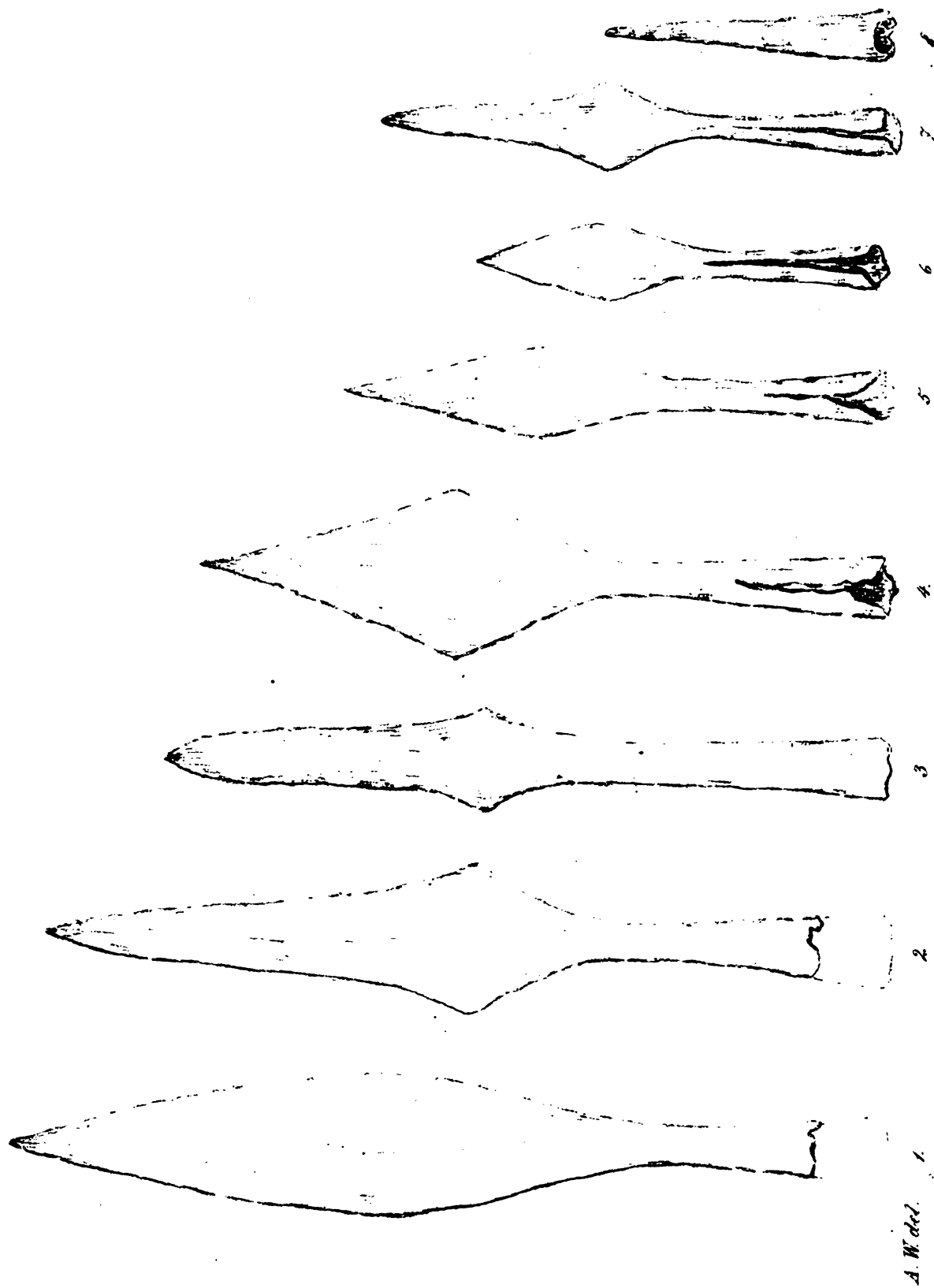
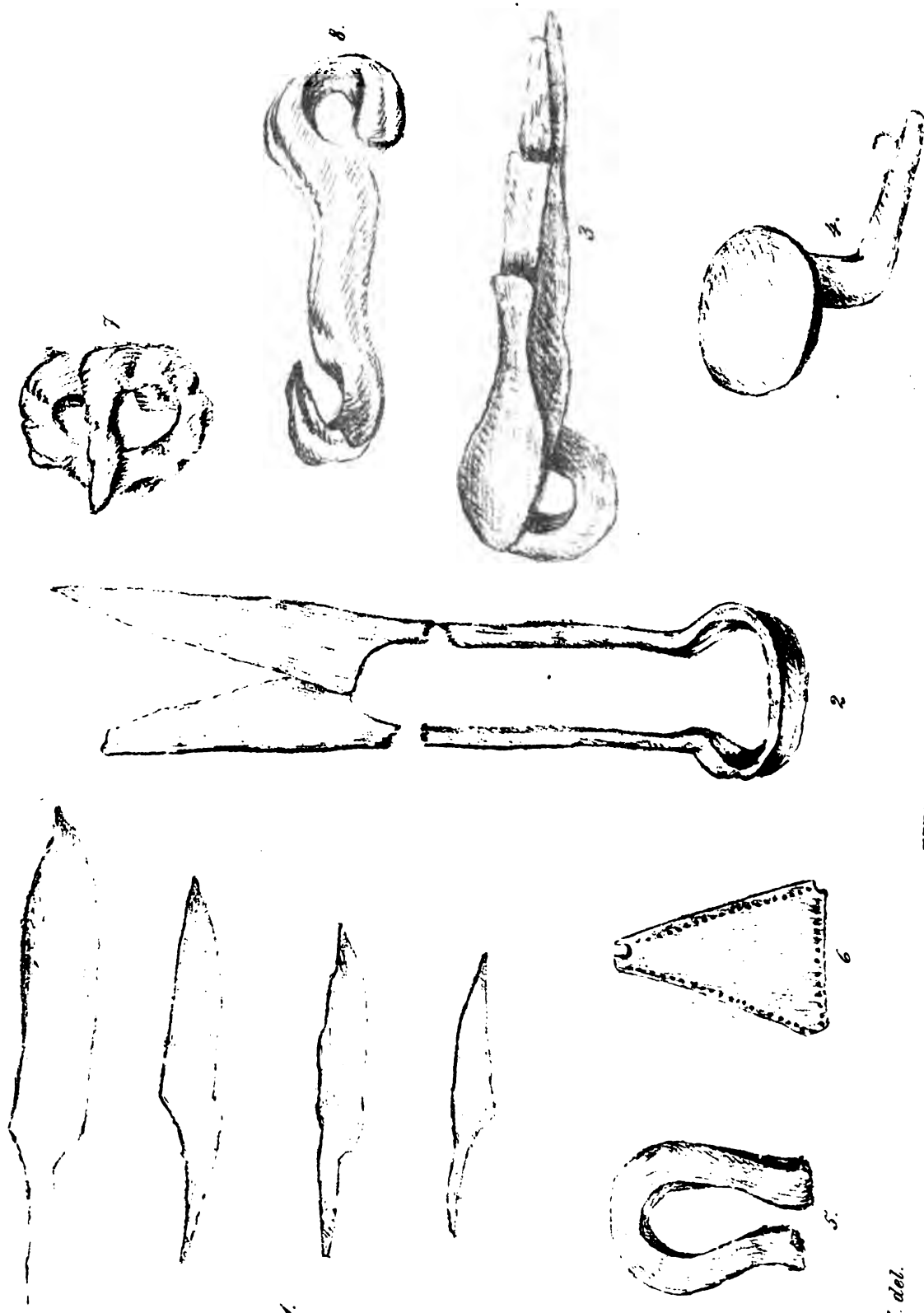


PLATE XII.

FIG.

1. Iron Knives. } Half size.
2. Shears. }
3. Iron Staple—half size. } From a Grave. Use unknown.
4. Iron Pin—full size. }
5. Piece of thin iron of horse-shoe form, found in a grave under the bottom
of a vessel of grey pottery—actual size.
6. One of fifteen triangular pieces of metal, which probably were the orna-
ments of a Drinking Cup—actual size.
7. } Iron Buckle and Hook—actual size.
- S. }



KNIVES, SHEARS &c

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SKETCH OF GRAVE,

Opened March 7th.

